

Louisiana also ranks third in the Nation in shipbuilding. According to the U.S. Maritime Administration shipbuilding accounts for 29,250 jobs and more than \$2.23 billion in annual economic impact for our State.

However, Congress has the responsibility for ensuring that our Nation's maritime infrastructure is adequately maintained in order for this industry to flourish. There is no greater maritime asset in the United States than the Mississippi River and its tributaries. They connect over 350 million acres of farmland to world markets via international trade through the 12,500 miles of inland navigational channels. Much of the commodities and goods produced in the heartland brought to world markets via the Mississippi River to the Gulf of Mexico and beyond to foreign nations around the globe.

The Mississippi River Basin includes 41 percent of the continental United States, and the value of the agricultural products and the large agribusiness industry in the Mississippi River Basin produces 92 percent of the Nation's agricultural exports and 78 percent of the world's exports in feed grains and soybeans, while 60 percent of all grain exported from the United States is shipped via the Mississippi River from ports throughout the region, including the Port of New Orleans, the Port of South Louisiana, and the Port of Greater Baton Rouge. Barge traffic and navigation on the Mississippi River also carries a vast array of coal, fertilizer, cement, chemicals, and petroleum products, so any significant disruption to this navigational channel has huge consequences for the entire U.S. economy.

Unfortunately, the recent winter and spring floods in the Mississippi River Valley have severely impeded navigational traffic along significant stretches along the Mississippi River ship channel. For example, at Southwest Pass along the lower Mississippi River ship channel, the authorized draft is 47 feet, but due to the excess sand and silt washing downstream from the flooding, the ship channel had draft restrictions of 41 feet for a month earlier this year. Economically, for each foot of draft loss a vessel either on the inbound or outbound voyage must leave behind approximately \$1 million, per foot, in cargo behind. This is particularly problematic because the last foot of draft is often where a vessel makes any profits. So during a month timeframe, each vessel traveling along the Mississippi River at Southwest Pass could potentially have had to leave behind \$6 million in cargo, an average of 30 vessels per day moving through the channel. An unreliable ship channel threatens the viability of barge traffic along the entire Mississippi River system by raising the transportation costs to move cargo.

Navigation along the Mississippi River system is just one example of many maritime infrastructure challenges our Nation faces. Congress has

the responsibility for providing the resources necessary to keep America's infrastructure open for business. Inaction is not an option if we want to keep United States competitive in the global marketplace. Across America, the domestic maritime industry includes approximately 40,000 vessels, supports 478,440 jobs, and has an annual economic impact of \$92.5 billion. The industry also generates approximately \$92.5 billion in wages and \$10 billion in tax revenues. In honor of this quintessentially American industry and National Maritime Day, I look forward to working with my colleagues to find solutions for America's maritime infrastructure challenges.

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT COMMANDER ROBERT DONNELL

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize LCDR Robert Donnell of the U.S. Coast Guard on his upcoming promotion to commander and for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and other members of the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee over the past several years.

An aviator by training, Lieutenant Commander Donnell has ably contributed to the committee's work and has been an invaluable asset in the passage of two U.S. Coast Guard Reauthorization bills, the Port Performance Act, and a number of key freight rail issues. He has made himself available to my staff and other members to help with all matters pertaining to the committee.

On behalf of the committee, I would like to congratulate and thank him and his family for their selfless and dedicated service to our Nation. This well-deserved promotion recognizes his leadership and commitment to serving others. He is a valued member of my Commerce Committee staff who will be truly missed. At the same time, we wish him every success in his new position as operations officer, U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Traverse City, MI.

DISCHARGE PETITION—S.J. RES. 28

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, hereby direct that the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry be discharged from further consideration of S.J. Res. 28, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Secretary of Agriculture relating to inspection of fish of the order Siluriformes, and further, that the resolution be placed upon the Legislative Calendar under General Orders.

Kelly Ayotte, John McCain, Patrick J. Toomey, Marco Rubio, Mike Lee, Michael B. Enzi, Chuck Grassley, Jeanne Shaheen, Sheldon Whitehouse, Robert Menendez, Maria Cantwell, Bill Nelson, Jack Reed, Dianne Feinstein, Jeff Flake, Richard Burr, Ted Cruz, Daniel Coats, James E. Risch, Joni Ernst, Thom Tillis, James Lankford, Ron Johnson, Al Franken, Cory A. Booker, Elizabeth Warren, Angus King, Jr., Ed-

ward J. Markey, Mark R. Warner, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Tim Kaine, Ron Wyden, Mike Crapo.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING LEX "BUTCH" EDWARD DAVIS

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to remember the life of Lex "Butch" Edward Davis, who passed away on April 11, 2016.

Butch Davis called Sherwood, AR, home. He was born in Des Arc, AR, on August 8, 1944. When he was 16, he enlisted in the U.S. Army. His service from 1961 to 1969 included two tours in Korea and one in Vietnam, before receiving an honorable medical discharge from injuries he received.

Butch was awarded the Bronze Star, Combat Infantryman's Badge, and the Purple Heart.

His service resulted in severe wounds that left him with very limited use of his legs and arms and a 100 percent VA disability rating. Despite these setbacks, Butch continued an active role in his community and among veteran organizations.

He served as a VFW commander at Post 395 in Sherwood. He was a member of both the Camp Robinson/Camp Pike and Little Rock Air Force Base community councils. He launched the community's Veterans Day parade and was the caretaker of the Sherwood Rotary Club Veterans Memorial. Butch could always be counted on to help at every air show and many other activities at Little Rock Air Force Base. His commitment earned him the recognition of "honorary commander" at Little Rock Air Force Base. In 2011, he was honored as one of 15 inductees into the Arkansas Military Veterans Hall of Fame.

He also gave back to his community in other ways, including serving as an alderman in Sherwood from 1998 until 2010 and was even named Sherwood Volunteer of the Year. He served as co-organizer of the Wheel Chair Olympics and played an active role in his community and the greater central Arkansas area for many years.

A true family man and dear friend, Butch leaves behind many loved ones, including his wife, Judy, three children, and many other friends. I want to offer my prayers and sincere condolences to his loved ones on their loss. Butch's service and sacrifice speak for themselves, but I would like to take this time to recognize him and join with his family and friends in expressing my immense pride in his life and legacy.●

MEASURES DISCHARGED

The following joint resolution was discharged by petition, pursuant to 5